

City of Alexandria, Virginia

MEMORANDUM

DATE: MARCH 26, 2007

TO: HONORABLE MAYOR AND MEMBERS OF CITY COUNCIL

FROM: JAMES K. HARTMANN, CITY MANAGER

SUBJECT: BUDGET MEMO #:17 NEEDS IDENTIFIED DURING THE LAST INNER CITY WALK

This budget memorandum is in response to Councilman Krupicka’s question: *“Can staff identify areas of the current budget that meet the needs identified in the last Inner City walk? Are there any needs that are not addressed?”*

The following needs identified during the last Inner City Walk (Saturday, April 1, 2006), are funded in the Proposed FY 2008 Budget:

- **New Trash Cans:**
An amount of \$185,000 is budgeted in the Capital Improvement Program (CIP) as the last phase of the plan to replace old and damaged trash cans with new ornamental containers Citywide. To date, most of the street cans on the City’s main thoroughfares have been replaced with the new ornamental containers. The FY 2008 budget contains funds to complete the replacement in all other areas of the City, including the Inner City area. However, for new can location which is part of the Inner City request, \$1,000 per new can would need to be budgeted.
- **Improvements to City parks such as Hunter-Miller and beautification efforts on Patrick and Henry Street:**
An amount of \$80,000 is budgeted in the CIP for Hunter-Miller Park improvements, including tree planting and pruning, park maintenance and playground repairs. To make a total funding of \$100,000 for this purpose, two developers have provided an additional \$20,000. Although there are no CIP or operating funds budgeted specifically for beautification of Patrick and Henry Streets, the Recreation, Parks and Cultural Affairs Department (RCPA) budget has a total of \$747,611 for urban forestry activities in order to help provide care for 17,000 trees. Also, the RCPA Department has a budget of \$401,980 for horticultural activities to maintain high quality design within the right-a-ways and medians and all landscaped public spaces.

The following needs identified during the last Inner City Walk are not funded in the Proposed FY 2008 Budget:

- **Wider sidewalks on area adjacent to the Metro Station (Wythe Street) as properties develop:**

One of the express goals of the Braddock Metro Neighborhood Plan is to provide a safe and secure walkable environment through appropriately-scaled sidewalks, new and enhanced crosswalks, landscaping, pedestrian-scale lighting and new multi-use trails connecting neighborhoods to the Metro Station and beyond. The Plan recognizes that there are many older, formerly industrially developed parcels that lack sidewalks and provides streetscape design guidelines to ensure that, as redevelopment occurs, new sidewalks and related streetscape improvements will be required to promote a safe, walkable and bicycle-friendly environment.

Challenges exist in many parts of the Parker-Gray neighborhood where redevelopment is unlikely, including portions of Patrick and Henry Street further south through Old Town. This would require the City to acquire additional right-of-way, where possible, to facilitate the widening of existing sidewalks. Depending on the type and width of sidewalk installed, estimated costs (excluding engineering, design and right-of-way acquisition costs) range between \$62,000 for a six-foot wide sidewalk and \$112,000 for a fourteen-foot wide brick sidewalk, per blockface. So while the immediate blocks around the Metro Station and some other blocks will be improved through redevelopment, the widening of other sidewalks throughout the neighborhood will depend on the feasibility and competition for Capital Improvement Program (CIP) funding with other improvements in this area and other parts of the City.

A total of \$600,000 over five years (FY 2009-FY2013), is planned in the CIP for streetscape improvements to include wider sidewalks, new street furniture, plantings and other related improvements for King Street, Braddock and Landmark/Van Dorn consistent with the plans that have been, or will be, approved for these areas.

- **Acquisition of 728 N. Patrick Street Property (Canal 8 Club) for low-income housing:**
No funds have been included in the FY 2008 Proposed budget for the acquisition and redevelopment of this property. The property is assessed at \$545,685 and the existing business, as well as a new one in the process of relocating to the vacant portion of the property, would need to be made whole. An existing grocery/convenience store is on the Madison Street side of the property and the vacant Patrick Street portion of the property is under lease to a barber shop/beauty salon that has received BAR approval for the space. If the City were to acquire the property by eminent domain, the City would be required to pay business relocation and re-establishment costs to both businesses. The demolition of the existing structure and redevelopment of a new one would entail significant additional costs to the City.

- **Lighting upgrade for the Braddock Metro/path that runs parallel to condominiums down to Cameron Street:**

The lighting system along this path, a non-City right-of-way, is owned and maintained by the Washington Metropolitan Area Transit Authority (WMATA) and by Dominion Virginia Power Inc. There is no funding in the City's FY 2008 budget for the upgrade of this lighting system.

